



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FROM: TOWN MANAGER
DATE: September 4, 2014
SUBJ: GENERAL UPDATE

The following is meant to be a general update of activities of the Town Manager and staff. Should any member desire more information regarding any particular matter please contact me personally.

1. Special Town Meeting – In light of the approval of the Reserve Fund Transfer request by the Finance Committee I have gone forward and secured the services of the vendor with the lower of the cost proposals to provide the necessary audio/visual services necessary to accommodate a possible overflow crowd. A minor piece of this transfer is also for rental of a voter registration tent outside the school and the rental (including delivery and pick up) of additional folding chairs.
2. MSBA Meeting – On Tuesday morning I attended a meeting with MSBA officials in Boston regarding the town's pending application. This meeting included the School Supt. and Asst. Supt as well as the architect and owners project manager and was intended to ensure that our application is on track for approval for the Sept. 24 MSBA meeting . The feedback we received from the legal and architectural staff was excellent. There were a few clarifications that they were seeking but otherwise they expressed great confidence in the management of the project to date. So, it would appear that there are not obstacles to approval on Sept. 24.
3. Veteran's Services – As you know James Crosby started last week as the Abington-Whitman Veteran's District Director. He has had the opportunity to attend a meeting of his peers in the region and has his training with the state Department of Veterans Affairs scheduled. Next week we will be meeting to discuss the recruiting of the part time Veteran's Services Officer. Lorrie Barry will continue to assist for the next couple of weeks until James has the necessary training and clearances.
4. Memorial Arch – Most people have viewed the scaffolding around the Arch in the past two weeks. It is anticipated that the masonry restoration will be done in 2-3 weeks although there is a degree of cooperation necessary from the weather. Should this happen the bronze work (also weather dependent) can be done in the beginning of October. If the weather does not cooperate it is possible that the bronze work will need to be pushed into the early spring.
5. DPW Legislation – I have contacted the the offices of Sen. Keenen and Rep. Diel for an update on the charter change legislation approved by town meeting. I will pass along information as I receive it.
6. Personnel – We have begun the process of updating position descriptions for management union and non-union positions. This will take some time but we have collected up to date examples of most positions from other communities and will be tailoring these for use in Abington. While it is not absolutely necessary to update these prior to engaging the services of a consultant to perform regional wage and classification survey/plan, I have been instructed that the funds spent on the consultant will be more productive. Also, in the reasonably near future I will be providing the Board with a draft Personnel By-Law update that reflects the advice contained in our human resources audit as well as the fact that there are hardly any employees covered by the personnel by-law.

7. Rail Trail Dedication – A reminder that this event has been moved to Sept 21.
8. Peer Consulting – We had follow up meeting with local business owners on Thursday to discuss the report of our “Peer Consultant” Mr. Jack Hunter (Carver’s Director of Land Use Planning). I will see that all of you have a hard copy of that report. This is intended as a launching point in the effort to make the town’s business and commercial areas more attractive – which I am more convinced can’t be done without an engaged business community. We left the meeting with the intent of my office facilitating a meeting later in the fall (business “roundtable” or “council”) to get more input and ideas for dealing with parking, traffic, signage, etc. in the center areas. I think all of us involved were pleased by the advice and insight of those business owners who have participated to date.